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ABSTRACT

The results of the high school student opinion survey for 1970 are discussed. Degrees of satisfaction for perception of curriculum, school image, school rules, and staff student relations are presented. A summary of findings on specific items such as classroom activities and procedures; opinions on changes in facilities and rules; effectiveness of student government; study halls; school activities; and assistance with personal problems is included. (MS)

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COLUMBUS PUBLIC SCHOOLS

DEPARTMENT OF EVALUATION AND RESEARCH
COLUMBUS, OHIO

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STUDENT OPINION SURVEY: 1970

AN INTERIM REPORT TO THE COLUMBUS BOARD OF EDUCATION

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Columbus Public Schools

August 26, 1970

Student Opinion Survey: 1970

The Columbus Board of Education in August, 1969, established a three-point student relations policy ". . . that all secondary schools shall make a concerted effort to:

1. Facilitate two-way communications between the student body and the professional staff of the school.

2. Provide the maximum feasible opportunity for secondary school students to participate in the government of the school in which they are enrolled.

3. Provide the kind of co-curricular program that enables students to give expression to their emerging personal needs, interests and concerns."[1]

The policy requires an annual survey of students in relation to co-curricular activities, and a general opinion survey of secondary students in the school semester of the school year. In designing the initial instrument, it was found that students held opinions on topics they wished to express, that administrators were interested in student opinion on certain concerns, and members of the Board of Education wished information in certain areas. In many areas these concerns overlapped. It should be noted that representatives of the following roles were asked to assist in building the instrument by indicating items of interest to themselves; members of the Board of Education, central administration personnel, building principals, guidance counselors, activity coordinators, instruction coordinators, and members of the thirteen senior high school survey committees (students, faculty, parents and citizens). From their reactions and expressions, the initial items were modified, with additions and deletions made as required. Restrictions were not placed on the content or focus of items. This facilitated the expression of opinion on a broad range of topics.

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[1] Administrative Guide. The Columbus Public Schools, Section 1026.01

It would have been possible to use probability sampling in the survey However, building level personnel, such as the activity coordinators, indicated that a saturation survey of the entire senior high student body would be preferable. Each student would have an opportunity to express himself.

Since the number of students enrolled in the senior high schools of the district is large, approximately 17,700, the reduction and analysis of the survey by any method would require many hours work. Although questions permitting open ended responses are always desirable, the analysis of such responses with such a large group was not considered to be feasible. Thus, items were designed with objective responses. The response choices provided were those considered to be the most likely range of responses. In most cases, the range of responses provided proved to be adequate. However, in some instances, lack of knowledge of the realities limits the interpretation of responses to being able to state only what students did not choose. That is, a response choice to four items was "other". This response was the most frequent choice in three cases. It was possible, however to salvage a great deal of information from these items by analysis of the responses in terms of most frequent, second choice, third choice, etc.

Students, faculty, and other members of the educational community have expressed concern over the lack of opportunity to make open end responses. Other expressions have been in relation to the item content or focus of the opinionnaire. This department will be working with interested members of the educational community to provide for some means of accommodating the need for open end responses, to provide more adequate focus, and to permit the addition of a block of questions which are developed specifically for a school. The school survey committees, faculty council, principal, activity

and instruction coordinators, and P.T.A. members will be included in the process of instrument development. Arrangements will have to be made for analysis of open end responses at the building level.

Administration

The opinionnaire was administered in the thirteen high schools during the week of April 20 through 24. Following is a summary of the number of students sampled by grade, by school, and by grade within school. All students present on the administration day were provided the opportunity to respond. The 13,799 students surveyed represents 78 per cent of the student population based on enrollments as of January 23, 1970.

Analysis

The optical scanning response sheets were processed by the Department of Data Processing. Computer files were established for each grade level of each senior high school. A print out with response distribution for each item was prepared by grade level, by school. These response distributions were then aggregated by school, and by school system.

Items which are related, and which could be grouped, were considered to be factors on which indices could be developed for comparison across grade levels within a school, and for comparison of schools to the system on those factors. Four indices were developed by this method: Perception of Curriculum, Perception of School Image, Perception of School Rules and Perception of Staff-Student Relations. Responses were adjusted for directionality. The five response position items were dichotomized, as were the agree-disagree-undecided items so that complete positive agreement, on all positive and nearly positive

A SUMMARY OF THE NUMBER OF STUDENTS
RESPONDING TO THE STUDENT OPINION SURVEY

School	Grade 10	Grade 11	Grade 12	All Grades
Brookhaven	489	400	330	1,219
Central	347	286	213	846
East	325	226	237	788
Eastmoor	390	378	347	1,115
Linden-McKinley	537	360	325	1,222
Marion-Franklin	419	243	143	805
Mohawk	134	114	108	356
North	413	432	297	1,142
Northland	383	346	247	976
South	465	356	283	1,104
Walnut Ridge	497	402	339	1,238
West	620	551	472	1,643
Whetstone	508	416	421	1,345
Total	5,527	4,510	3,762	13,799

responses would yield an index of 1.0. Complete disagreement would yield an index of zero. Since there is no information on "normal" levels of response, the indices may be compared to the system average or an external standard for degree of satisfaction. As the names of the factors indicates, these are student perceptions, not necessarily reflections of the absolute situations.

Perception of Curriculum--The items included in this factor were as numbered in the instrument 9, 30, 31, 38.

Perception of School Image--This factor includes items, as numbered in the instrument, 26 and 27.

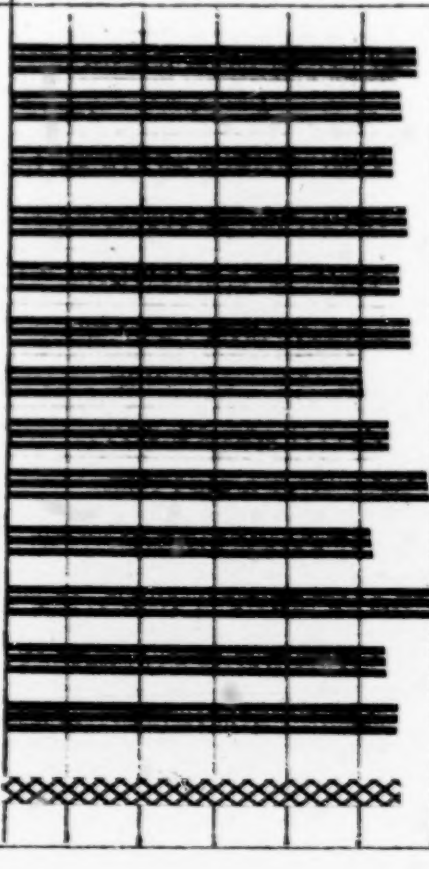
Perception of School Rules--The factor includes items 12, 13, 28, 32, 33, 35, 36, 39 and 41, as numbered in the instrument.

Perception of Staff-Student Relations--This factor includes items 16, 19, 29 and 37, as numbered in the instrument.

Other items deal with specific concerns and could not be appropriately included in an index. Thus, they have been reported independently. The detailed analysis of response distributions, by schools, for each of these items will be made available to each of the schools. Thus, it is possible to identify system wide patterns and the more localized concerns. Tables I, II, III, and IV include graphic representations of the degree of satisfaction on each of the factors for each high school and all of the high schools combined.

TABLE I

Perception of Curriculum

School	% of Satis.	10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90 100
Brookhaven	58.1	
Central	55.9	
East	53.9	
Eastmoor	57.6	
Linden-McKinley	55.7	
Marion Franklin	56.6	
Mohawk	50.2	
North	54.3	
Northland	58.9	
South	51.4	
Walnut Ridge	61.0	
West	53.5	
Whetstone	54.8	
Avg. for all schools	55.8	

Perception of Curriculum

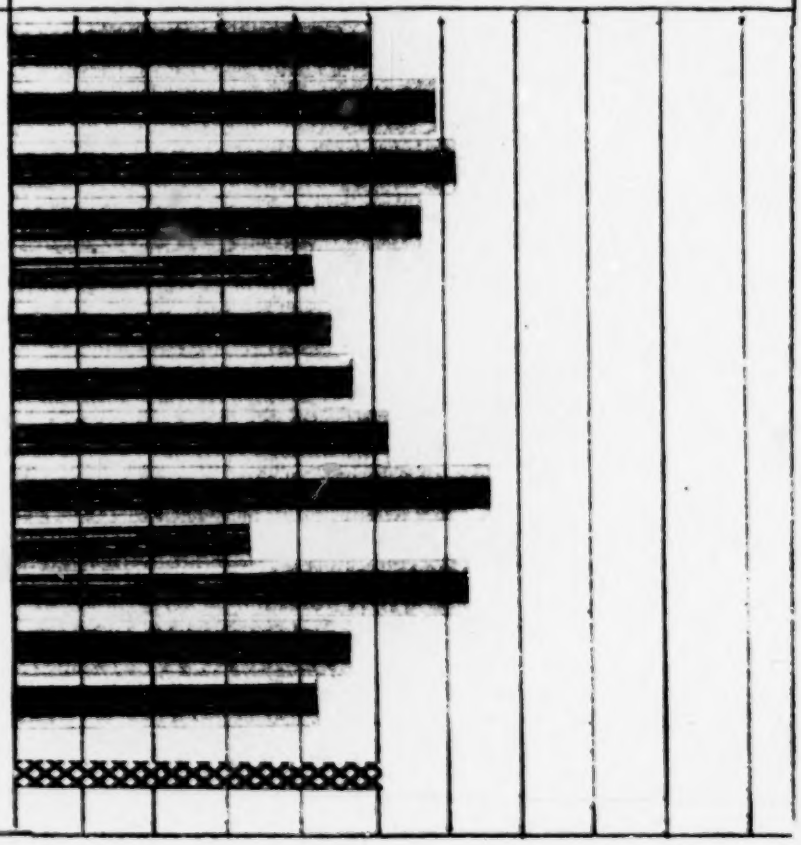
Degree of Satisfaction - System Percentages

	Lowest School	Highest School	System Range	System Average
Grade 10	49.8	63.2	13.4	57.7
Grade 11	51.7	61.1	9.4	56.2
Grade 12	44.3	58.8	14.5	52.4
All Grades	50.2	61.0	10.8	55.8

TABLE II

School Image

School	% of Satis.	10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90 100
Brookhaven	49.6	
Central	58.8	
East	61.4	
Eastmoor	57.3	
Linden-McKinley	41.4	
Marion Franklin	45.2	
Mohawk	47.8	
North	50.6	
Northland	65.8	
South	32.7	
Walnut Ridge	62.9	
West	47.5	
Whetstone	41.7	
Avg. for all schools	50.5	



School Image

Degree of Satisfaction - System Percentages

	Lowest School	Highest School	System Range	System Average
Grade 10	30.9	69.2	38.3	51.3
Grade 11	33.0	63.9	30.9	50.0
Grade 12	35.1	69.0	33.9	49.8
All Grades	32.7	65.8	33.1	50.5

TABLE III

Perception of School Rules

School	% of Satis.	10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90 100
Brookhaven	39.1	
Central	45.9	
East	42.8	
Eastmoor	45.2	
Linden-McKinley	37.6	
Marion Franklin	38.4	
Mohawk	40.8	
North	39.3	
Northland	46.2	
South	36.2	
Walnut Ridge	43.6	
West	41.6	
Whetstone	41.2	
Avg. for all schools	41.3	

Perception of School Rules

Degree of Satisfaction - System Percentages

	Lowest School	Highest School	System Range	System Average
Grade 10	36.1	47.9	11.8	44.9
Grade 11	35.4	44.1	8.7	40.3
Grade 12	35.4	47.5	12.1	41.7
All Grades	36.2	46.2	10.0	41.3

TABLE IV

Staff-Student Relations

School	% of Satis.	10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90 100
Brookhaven	45.1	
Central	48.3	
East	45.2	
Eastmoor	49.8	
Linden-McKinley	43.3	
Marion Franklin	46.4	
Mohawk	47.5	
North	41.7	
Northland	47.2	
South	43.8	
Walnut Ridge	47.9	
West	40.5	
Whetstone	38.1	
Avg. for all schools	44.6	

Staff - Student Relations

Degree of Satisfaction - System Percentages

	Lowest School	Highest School	System Range	System Average
Grade 10	34.1	49.7	15.6	42.6
Grade 11	38.2	49.4	11.2	44.0
Grade 12	41.9	58.4	16.5	48.1
All Grades	38.1	49.8	11.7	44.6

Perception of Curriculum

The items of the Student Opinion Survey comprising the Perception of Curriculum factor are listed in Table V. A majority (55.8%) of the students surveyed indicated satisfaction with the curriculum. However, for all schools combined the degree of satisfaction decreases across grades from grade 10 (57.7%) to grade 12 (52.4%). The same pattern of decreased satisfaction from grade 10 to 12 is evident in all of the high schools. At five schools, Whetstone, Mohawk, Linden-McKinley, Eastmoor, and East, the per cent of satisfaction in grade 11 is higher than either grade 10 or grade 12. In the other schools the degree of satisfaction strictly decreases from grade 10 through grade 12.

TABLE V

PERCEPTION OF CURRICULUM

	Grade 10 %	Grade 11 %	Grade 12 %	All Grades %
Brookhaven	60.0	57.7	55.7	58.1
Central	57.3	56.5	52.9	55.9
East	54.0	56.1	51.4	53.9
Eastmoor	58.7	60.3	53.6	57.6
Linden-McKinley	55.7	58.2	52.8	55.7
Marion-Franklin	59.7	54.8	50.9	56.6
Mohawk	49.8	52.4	48.4	50.2
North	56.9	53.1	52.5	54.3
Northland	63.2	57.9	53.3	58.9
South	55.5	51.7	44.3	51.4
Walnut-Ridge	62.8	61.1	58.8	61.0
West	56.5	52.8	50.3	53.5
Whetstone	55.2	56.2	53.1	54.8
All Schools	57.7	56.2	52.4	55.8

Items used for factor: 9 30 31 38

Staff-Student Relations

The degree of satisfaction for all schools combined on the Staff-Student Relations factor is 44.6%. For the total school system the average percentage of positive opinion increases from grade 10 (42.6%) through grade 12 (48.1%). The same pattern of increase across grades is evident at eight high schools, Central, East, Marion-Franklin, Mohawk, North, South, Walnut Ridge and Whetstone. Following is a summary of the Staff-Student Relations factor by grade within school, by school, and for the total school system. The values range from 34.1% to 58.4%. Across schools and across grades for the total system the degree of satisfaction is less than fifty per cent (50.0%) which constitutes a simple majority.

TABLE VI

STAFF-STUDENT RELATIONS

	Grade 10 %	Grade 11 %	Grade 12 %	All Grades %
Brookhaven	44.2	46.1	45.3	45.1
Central	43.7	49.4	54.2	48.3
East	43.5	44.1	48.4	45.2
Eastmoor	49.7	48.2	51.5	49.8
Linden-McKinley	41.7	47.2	45.8	43.3
Marion-Franklin	45.3	45.3	51.3	46.4
Mohawk	40.9	44.5	58.4	47.5
North	38.5	41.3	46.9	41.7
Northland	47.2	44.2	51.1	47.2
South	40.5	43.2	47.0	43.8
Walnut Ridge	44.8	46.9	53.8	47.9
West	41.3	38.2	41.9	40.5
Whetstone	34.1	40.8	45.1	38.1
All Schools	42.6	44.0	48.1	44.6

Items used for factor: 16 19 29 37

School Image

The School Image factor is a measure of positive opinion of students towards their school. For the total system the percentage of positive response decreased from grade 10 (51.3%) through grade 12 (49.8%). At six schools, Brookhaven, Marion-Franklin, Northland, Walnut Ridge, West and Whetstone, the percentage decreases from grade 10 to grade 12. The percentage of positive opinion for all grades and schools combined is approximately fifty percent. (50.5%).

TABLE VII

SCHOOL IMAGE

	Grade 10 %	Grade 11 %	Grade 12 %	All Grades %
Brookhaven	55.1	49.3	41.9	49.6
Central	58.5	56.2	62.7	58.8
East	55.7	61.5	69.0	61.4
Eastmoor	55.7	58.2	58.2	57.3
Linden-McKinley	41.0	41.3	42.0	41.4
Marion-Franklin	47.5	42.4	43.1	45.2
Mohawk	38.1	49.6	57.9	47.8
North	50.7	48.3	53.7	50.6
Northland	69.2	61.7	66.2	65.8
South	30.9	33.0	35.1	32.7
Walnut Ridge	66.8	63.9	55.9	62.9
West	53.9	46.0	40.8	47.5
Wheatstone	41.1	44.5	40.8	41.7
All Schools	51.3	50.0	49.8	50.5

Items used for factor: 26 27

Perception of School Rules

The nine items comprising this category measure student opinion on school rules and the enforcement of the rules by the staff. For all schools combined the average per cent of satisfaction decreases from grade 10 (44.9%) to grade 12 (41.7%). However, the per cent of satisfaction for grade 11 is lowest (40.3%). In six schools, Central, East, Eastmoor, Mohawk, North, and Whetstone, the per cent of satisfaction increases from grade 10 to grade 12. Table VIII summarizes average per cent of satisfaction for the perception of school rules category by school, by grade within school, and by grade within all schools. The entries in Table VIII range from a minimum of 35.4% to a maximum of 47.9%. The per cent of satisfaction on this factor is strictly less than fifty per cent (50.0%) which represents a simple majority of the students. For the nine items constituting the factor an average of nineteen per cent (19%) of the students gave an undecided response. Concerning specific items a majority of students agreed that the dress code is reasonable and that there should be changes in paddling and suspension rules. A majority (80.8%) of the students sampled disagreed with the statement that the rules of the school are enforced the same by all teachers.

TABLE VIII

PERCEPTION OF SCHOOL RULES

	Grade 10 %	Grade 11 %	Grade 12 %	All Grades %
Brookhaven	42.4	38.9	35.4	39.1
Central	46.7	44.1	47.5	45.9
East	42.1	42.3	44.0	42.8
Eastmoor	45.0	43.6	46.0	45.2
Linden-McKinley	37.5	37.8	37.3	37.6
Marion-Franklin	39.8	37.4	38.1	38.4
Mohawk	36.1	39.4	46.9	40.8
North	40.6	38.2	41.8	39.3
Northland	47.9	43.8	46.9	46.2
South	36.9	35.4	35.9	36.2
Walnut Ridge	45.3	41.6	43.7	43.6
West	43.4	40.1	41.3	41.6
Whetstone	37.9	42.1	42.1	41.2
All Schools	44.9	40.3	41.7	41.3

Items included in factor: 12 13 28 32 33 35 36 39 41

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS ON SPECIFIC ITEMS

Items 4, 10, 18 and 23 measures classroom procedures and activities favored by students

Item 4 - Class procedure favored

In general, the predominant response across all grade levels in all schools concerning preferred class procedure was an increase in demonstrations, audio-visual presentations, and field trips. Seniors at East, Mohawk, and North prefer more small group discussions and debates, and seniors at Whetstone prefer independent study procedures. Although all grade levels at other schools prefer demonstrations, audio-visual presentations, and field trips, there was a decreasing number of students favoring these activities from grades 10 through 12 at Brookhaven, Eastmoor, Marion-Franklin, Walnut Ridge, and Whetstone. This decrease was also reflected in system averages for grades 10 through 12.

Item 10 - Main weakness of present classes

The predominant response for item 10 was that courses do not deal with current problems. Sophomores at all schools feel this is the major weakness of classes. Juniors and seniors at Northland are concerned with classes being too large. Juniors at Whetstone and seniors at Eastmoor are also concerned about large classes. Seniors at four schools - Brookhaven, Linden-Mckinley, North, and Whetstone feel that classes are not related to personal needs.

In general, students feel that classes do not deal with current problems, but this concern decreases from 10th to 12th graders.

Item 18 - Type of teacher preferred

No clear pattern can be distinguished for this item. In general, seniors are concerned more with being treated as adults while sophomores and juniors prefer teachers who try to understand students' problems.

Item 23 - Fairness of grading system

The most predominant response for all grades within all schools was that the grading system used by teachers is fair most of the time. A majority of the sophomores and seniors feel that the grading system is fair all of the time or most of the time. Less than a majority of juniors (48.1%) hold this opinion about the grading system. Across schools the majority of students expressed the opinion that the grading system was fair all or most of the time except at East (46.3%).

In general students expressed satisfaction with the fairness of the grading systems utilized by teachers.

Items 7, 8, 20 and 34 measured student opinion on changes in facilities and school rules.

Item 7 - Most important physical change needed

A student lounge is not as important to seniors as to sophomores. Across grades 10 to 12 there is a switch from a lounge to better temperature control. Better temperature control is the major concern of all grades at Brookhaven, Northland, South, Walnut Ridge, and Whetstone. Schools at which all grades prefer a lounge are Central, East, Eastmoor, Linden-McKinley, Marion-Franklin, Mohawk, North and West.

Item 8 - Most important change needed in the schools

The predominant response of all grades for the system was student participation in making school rules. This was the major concern of all grades at Brookhaven, Marion-Franklin, North, Northland, Walnut Ridge, West and Whetstone. In general, seniors are concerned with student participation in making school rules except at Central and Eastmoor where they are concerned with course offerings. Juniors are concerned with student participation in making school rules except at Central (student lounge) and East (paddling and suspension). Sophomores at eight schools are concerned with participation in making school rules. At East, Linden-McKinley, and Mohawk the major concern of sophomores is paddling and suspension; at Central and South the major concern is a student lounge.

Item 20 - Change in lunch period

An open lunch period is the most pervasive change concern. Only Eastmoor, which already has open lunch, expressed other concerns about the lunch period.

Item 34 - Need for parking space

The predominant response across grades for the system was that more parking space is needed. The per cent of response indicating a need for additional space increases from grade 10 (57.8%) through grade 12 (62.7%). Across schools the majority of students indicated a need for additional space except Central, East, Mohawk, and Whetstone.

Items 15 and 43 concern effectiveness of the student government

Item 15 - Effectiveness of student government

The predominant response was that the student government has brought about few important changes. At Eastmoor, sophomores and seniors feel that the student government has brought about some important changes. Sophomores at Northland and South also feel that the student government has brought about some important changes. However, for the total system dissatisfaction with the student government increases across grades 10 to 12.

Item 43 - Effectiveness of student government

Across grades for the system the predominant response was that the student government is not doing a good job. Seniors are more dissatisfied than juniors and sophomores. At ten schools students expressed dissatisfaction with the student government. At Northland and Eastmoor students expressed satisfaction with student government, and at Central the students were undecided concerning the effectiveness of student government.

In general, students expressed the opinion that student government is not doing a good job.

Items 22 and 42 concerned study halls

Item 22 - Number of study halls per week

In general, over 50 percent of all sophomores across the school system spend seven or more periods a week in study halls. This percentage declines from grades 10 to 12 where over one-third of the seniors spend seven or more periods in study halls.

At nine schools over 50 percent of the sophomores spend seven or more periods a week in study halls. At Central, East, and Mohawk slightly over one-third of the sophomores spend this much time in study halls. At Northland and West over 50 percent of the juniors spend seven or more periods in study halls a week. Only at Central, East, Linden-McKinley, and Mohawk less than one-third of the juniors spend this much time in study halls.

At Brookhaven, Eastmoor, Marion-Franklin, North, Northland, Walnut Ridge, West, and Whetstone more than one-third of the seniors spend seven or more periods a week in study halls.

Item 42 - Usefulness of study halls

In general, the majority of all students at all schools except Central and East feel that study halls are a waste of time. The percentage of dissatisfaction with study halls ranges from 44.9% (Central to 70.2% (West). Generally the dissatisfaction with study halls increases across grades from 10 to 12.

Items 5 and 6 concern school activities

Item 5 - Participation in extra-curricular activities

In the system less than two-thirds of the students participate in extra-curricular activities. Of the students who participate, the most frequent reasons given for participation are the opportunity to be with other students and interest in the activities of the group.

Item 6 - Attitude towards school activities

Across grades for the system students did not agree with any of the four statements concerning school activities. The most frequent response was the fifth alternative "none of the above". However, an analysis of the second most

frequent response provides some information. The second most frequent response across grades was that the activities conflict with other responsibilities.

At Brookhaven, North, South and Whetstone the most frequent response is that activities conflict with other responsibilities. At the other schools conflict with other responsibilities was the second most prominent response with the "none of the above" alternative being chosen most frequently.

Item 17 concerns assistance with personal problems

Item 17 - Assistance with personal problems

Across grade for the system the majority of students indicated that they would not consult any school personnel concerning personal problems.

The second most frequent choice of sophomores and juniors was the guidance counselor while the seniors would consult a teacher.

At every school the most frequent response was that none of the school personnel would be consulted. At eleven schools the second choice was the guidance counselor and at two schools the teacher was the second choice.

In general, the majority of students would not consult a member of the school staff concerning a personal problem.

Items 14 and 40 concerns action to change a school rule

Item 14 - Expression of dislike for a rule

At eight schools the principal or assistant principal was most frequently chosen to be contacted concerning a change in school rules. At five schools;

Brookhaven, Eastmoor, North, Northland, and Walnut Ridge, the students would contact the student council representative most frequently. Across grades for the system, student government representatives were most frequently chosen by sophomores while juniors and seniors predominantly chose principals and assistant principals.

Item 40 - The right to ignore school rules

The most frequent response within all schools at every grade level was that students would not be within their rights to ignore rules. The majority of students expressed this opinion at all thirteen schools and across all grades for schools combined.